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December 5, 2006

Representative Barb Vander Veen
Chair
Committee on Senior Health, Security, and Retirement
N1193 House Office Building
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Representative Vander Veen:

MPRO appreciates the opportunity to address the committee concerning HB 6684 (Sponsor: Representative Caswell), a bill that would establish a state center for safe health care and regional centers for safe health care. MPRO works across the continuum of health care with providers, payors and consumers in developing successful quality improvement and patient safety projects. As such we are very interested in the development of appropriate legislative language that would formally create a patient safety center in Michigan. MPRO actively served on the Michigan State Commission on Patient Safety, both on its review panel and the analytic team.

We have carefully reviewed House Bill 6684 and believe that while it is a step in the right direction, it does not have the detail fully fleshed out about how this patient safety center can come to fruition. Therefore we can not support the bill as it is currently written. We feel that there are numerous details that have not yet been adequately addressed. Developing a successful patient safety center is incumbent upon selecting a freestanding, non profit organization, committed to the further development of a statewide, confidential and non-punitive voluntary error reporting system.

For 22 years, MPRO has been federally designated by the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services as the quality improvement organization (QIO) for the state of Michigan and its' 1.5 million Medicare beneficiaries. MPRO also provides quality improvement services to state Medicaid agencies in Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Virginia, and North Carolina.

MPRO is strongly committed to the rationale behind the proposed Michigan Center for Safe Healthcare. We applaud the Governor for her foresight in establishing the state commission and her continued interest in making this center a reality. We are very pleased that the concept of a state patient safety center has garnered the interest of the state legislature and are appreciative of Representative Caswell's interest in establishing a state patient safety center. The successful development relies on carefully considering how the center would be established and how it would interact with health care providers, payors, and consumers.

To successfully accomplish the goals of the patient safety center, the center needs to operate in a balanced, unbiased, non-punitive learning environment. The State Commission recommended that the Center involve a wide variety of stakeholders. However, the Center needs to be an independent entity free of any allegiances to health care providers, and not be housed within or accountable to a state agency or other regulatory or licensing body.

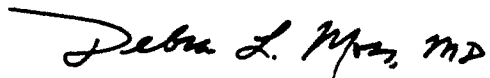
The patient safety center will need to have a well developed skill sets essential for effective management of the necessary operations including:

- project management;
- data collection and audit (from both claims and medical charts);
- database manipulation and management;
- data aggregation, analysis, and interpretation;
- provider feedback, quality improvement and clinical process redesign, improvement assistance to providers, both directly and through group collaboratives;
- government contracting experience;
- financial management and budgeting skills;
- subcontractor management and oversight; medical review of quality and utilization; and
- outreach & communication with health care beneficiaries about quality and patient safety.

Carefully developed health care quality improvement and patient safety programs have the ability to transform the safety and delivery of health care. To dramatically improve patient safety, the culture of health care in Michigan needs to be transformed. Additionally, it is critical that the center be established with a solid foundation that evokes trust and objectivity. It was clear from both public testimony and the expressed opinions of the majority of the commission members that the language establishing the Michigan Center for Safe Health Care needs to remain strong and clear in its intentions to demonstrate independence, objectivity, and no appearance of a conflict of interest.

MPRO remains committed to assisting the state in the development of a patient safety center. If I or my staff can be of additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at (248) 465-7400.

Sincerely,



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President and CEO
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